

Voices & Prayer Warriors

Spring
2023

Violence in the City

BY FRANK ULRICH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.” (Genesis 6:11)

The increase of violence in the city has been very disturbing and unsettling. Two of our missionaries (this is what our staff are referred to) were recently assaulted.

From the verse above, we learn that in the days of Noah, violence was also a part of society.

Based on what I have heard in the media, it appears that violence is related to the use of drugs or alcohol. People that struggle with poverty and addiction are lost and the by-product

of using the type of drugs that are now available is random acts of violence.

Thankfully, our Men’s and Women’s Addiction Recovery Programs offer freedom from addiction in Christ. We have seen people set free from the bondage of addiction through a relationship with Jesus. In fact, five of our missionaries, which represents 10 percent of our team, have gone through our addiction recovery program – Praise God!

“Need your Life...”

We are not immune to heart break at UGM as I imagine our supporters would understand. We were particularly impacted recently with initial grief and sorrow by the passing, due to overdose, of a beautiful young lady named Amber.



Amber was a resident at our Charis Centre. She was doing well and was loved by everyone she came into contact with. She was granddaughter to Audrey, a long time friend and volunteer at UGM. She was uniquely and wonderfully made by our Father God, as are all the ladies we have the privilege to serve.

Audrey spoke at the memorial service we held, to honor our sister's memory and to help heal the pain each one of us felt. “But I am very grateful again to you girls, hugging me after, (and I spent the night here), and you all got the privilege of meeting her (Amber) and to be part of someone's life. I thank the Lord for the Charis Centre. Years ago, the board of UGM, this was the goal on everyone's heart to have this place. I never thought my own granddaughter would come here and die here, but what's wonderful is she was under His covering...and I couldn't have said that a couple of days ago, but I can see it now. So consider yourselves blessed to be here (the ladies in addiction recovery). Do not go yet. Just **need your life**. Thank you. God Bless.”



A Thin Line between Tragedy and Triumph

Mervin checked himself out of our men's addiction program. Years and years of alcoholic abuse had left his liver sorely compromised and his stomach very bloated. He attended Bible classes, he sat with us at meals and listened as Jesus was shared. He was a gentle man.

The pain of abuse made his movements, his walk, slow. He was loved here and he loved back. He gave the pictured fan to one of our staff. It was symbolic. As the fan would stir the air, so did Mervin's stay here. One more drink outside. Just one more. Like a vapor in the wind and he was gone. Oh how we seek the assurance that Mervin knew Jesus as his Saviour. A tragic end – or is he in triumph? It hurts not knowing.

Darryl was in our program for recovering addicts a couple of times. A man who liked to smile, who liked to laugh. A man who rarely showed a heaviness at life, or who could be found in deep reflective repose.

A very generous man who constantly loved to help. He loved his family very much, but just could not shake the addictions that gripped and haunted him. A man who knew the Lord is at peace; tragedy with triumph at its end. Please pray for the family he has left behind.

Mervin and Darryl, it was our privilege to know you both.

UGM staff member forgives attackers after being brutally stabbed, left for dead

BY SYLVIA ST. CYR OF CHVN RADIO

A Winnipeg man is forgiving his attackers after being brutally stabbed two months ago.

“Over the years I've had some difficulties in my life with alcohol and drugs,” says Dennis Williams, one of the staff at Union Gospel Mission (UGM) in downtown Winnipeg. “I went from alcohol, to crack cocaine, to meth, which was my last fight. It was four years ago that I



got into meth and roughly two years ago I came into treatment at Union Gospel. It's not really what I wanted but it was what I needed because it's faith-based.”

Williams says that while he has been a believer in Jesus for a long time, his pride got in the way of surrendering his life to God.

“Once I let go and knew that I was not in charge because of the mess that I had made, it's been a lot easier.”

Violent Attack

On February 3, 2023, Williams had just finished a shift at UGM where they help feed and clothe the most vulnerable population in the city. He took the bus to his stop at Main Street and Henry Avenue.

“I was getting off the bus and I saw these three young guys and I said to myself, ‘I hope I don't have problems with them.’ I started walking down my regular route and I heard, ‘Hey you!’ I looked over and saw a young fellow with a hatchet so I started handing over my wallet.”

Williams goes on to share that he was attacked and blacked out for a minute or two.

“The next thing I remember was rolling around, fighting with some young guy with a knife that had stabbed me a couple times. His buddy called him off. The

The Need to Trust in the Great Name of Christ Jesus!

While Ron passed on the children's ministry leader baton at the Family Life Centre to a new team, the desire remains that the Lord continues His work here in using us to share of His awesome love. We do this through teaching and instructing the children He brings, in the way that they ought to go. Knowing that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom, instilling a regard for His word in the hearts of the children is key, as Romans 10:17 states, **"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."** We emphasize how the Bible reveals who God is, what He has done, is doing, and what He is going to do. Of course, a large part of this ministry is to pray for, listen to, play with, and get to know the children on a personal level.

Volunteers from a local Bible College brought models of the Tabernacle as a show & tell (as seen in photo). Most of the children were appreciative and seemed to respond very favorably.

We encourage you to pray with us that each child and their families would have a thirst for righteousness and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus, and those that have been saved would be stirred up to draw nearer to Him. Please pray that children would increase in their ability to focus,

"Convinced I was going to bleed out, I remember speaking to an officer. When I said, 'I'm going to die,' he said, 'Dennis, you're not going to die!' I didn't remember giving him my name. When I was looking at this officer, there was like a white glow around his body."

Recovery & Forgiveness

Williams spent the following month in the hospital recovering.

"My first few days in there, I wasn't really angry. I'd been in this situation before and survived. This time I truly feel like I was SAVED because I was able to forgive these young men for what they had done to me. The old Dennis would have wanted revenge, but that is not going to do me any good. It feels so much better not to have this burden of anger on me."

The physical recovery has been a slow process, but initially, the doctors thought Williams wouldn't ever walk without assistance and yet he's already there.

"I enjoy helping people, giving them lunch and some clothes [at UGM]. If I were to walk away and leave, they win, he wins. Now I know what Christ wants from me. He wants me to give something back after being given so much. Here is my mission that He's put in front of me. If God's going to forgive me, why not you."

Williams' lawyer and even a few members of his family found it hard to accept that he forgave the men who violently attacked him.

"I could have easily become that person. By the grace of God, he has saved me again and again and again. These men don't exactly know what is right and wrong because of the life they've grown up in. [In their minds, I imagine] there's nothing wrong with assaulting someone to get their money because of what they've seen all their life. I look at it that way. I'm no better than them by any means."

While Williams says he's a 'baby' in his faith walk, the Development Manager at UGM, Martin Chidwick, shares how much the rest of the staff have been greatly impacted by Williams's testimony of forgiveness.

"When we first went to the hospital to visit him, Dennis was on morphine, talking about how he was holding his intestines in [after the attack]," says Chidwick. "In answer to 'How are you doing?' he said, 'I'm fine, I still have Jesus.' This man is a hero to us. We love him and we are so blessed that he has this positive reaction to this. I stand in the presence of a giant."

Williams shares that UGM has 'given me a hand up rather than a handout.'

"I can't dance and run anymore, but I'll get there," says Williams. "I got rid of the brace and I'm able to walk around, I'm mobile and none of this would be possible without Christ. Hopefully, my story can help someone along the way."



guy with the hatchet was tapping his hand and I told them a bit of my story. Thank Christ he did not attack me because it would have been a lot worse, as bad as it was. The next thing I know the guy with the knife lunged at me, I put up my knee, he slashed my legs a few times and then fell on me. Stabbed me a few more times before taking my wallet. Then they fled."

At that moment, Williams thought he was going to die. He explains that a handful of men have died in that back lane. There was a video recording of the attack so after someone phoned the police; the three men were arrested shortly after.

especially during devotional & prayer time and that the Lord would use Sarah and us. Thank you to all who have already been praying with us.

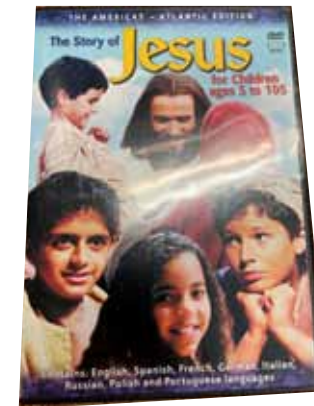
“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

Please pray for these children:

- Teilicia, Angelica, Lucius: Pray for them and their family, that they would thirst for righteousness and desire to hear the Gospel.
- Arcadia, Shantaya, August, Alyza: Please pray for their salvation. Please pray that they become regular attendees.
- Keteri & Camron: Please pray that they would desire to yield to Jesus. They are ‘curious’, if we read their erratic attendance correctly!
- Angel: Please pray that she would be willing and desiring to listen during devotional and prayer time.

- Peyton: Please pray that Peyton’s curiosity about the Bible would continue to grow. She has said that she is reluctant at times to attend the kids club because some of the other children are not always kind and sensitive – please pray that this would be resolved.
- Gabby, DJ and Delilah: Pray that they would be willing to listen to the Bible lesson and not be distracted. That their curiosity would grow and that they would continue asking questions.
- Dakota: She is not around much anymore. Pray that she would be interested in what the Bible has to say.
- Olivia, Aurora: Olivia is new to the group and Aurora comes infrequently. Please pray that they would desire to seek the Lord.

Please pray for a new Children’s Ministry Leader to come forth.



ADOPT-A-STUDENT

Unique Missionfield

BY GILBERT PLANTE
FAMILY MINISTRIES MANAGER

UGM employees are not your typical ‘9:00 – 5:00’, sit behind a desk employees. UGM employees are saved souls called to the Lord’s ministry, making us inner-city missionaries. As in many mission fields, you don’t always get to see the fruits of your labour. At times the work can be challenging and overwhelming, and one is under constant attack by the spiritual world. Paul reminds us in the Book of Ephesians to make sure we put on the armour of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. The apostle reminds us also to be strong in the Lord and be in the power of His might. What I love about this front line, in the trenches ministry work, is when you don’t think you can carry on any further, our great God will put a situation in front of you reminding you why it is you do the things you do, for Him. I received an email recently from one of the

teachers at our Pritchard campus. This is the email I received.

“Gilbert, today my students finished watching the Jesus video for kids and at the end, it gives viewers a chance to accept Christ. Sofia prayed this prayer last year, and all the rest of my students prayed this prayer today. 9 more names in the Book of Life!!!! Yay!!!!”

Upon hearing this wonderful news, along with the angels in Heaven, I was rejoicing. Nine more students being rooted in Christ; these students regardless of age, are thinking about things that have eternal value to them. Many students in the Christian school program come from homes that are riddled with addiction, dysfunction and poor life choices. The main priority of Union Gospel Mission is whatever door or whatever ministry lost souls are coming through, we want to introduce them to Jesus. To God be all the Glory!

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” Romans 10:17



I Love You Lord

BY MARLENE WIEBE, FLC WOMEN'S MINISTRY LEADER

Viv was faithful in attending FLC's Tuesday and Thursday Bible studies for many years and she became a good friend to myself and other participants. She brought her Bible and notebook and took notes at each study. She participated in the discussion with questions and insights to share.

The last gathering she attended at FLC was just before Christmas 2022. For some time she had been asking prayer for her health; her tummy was very sore. She underwent much testing to determine the issue. In January, 2023, Viv was admitted to hospital where she was diagnosed with aggressive cancer in her stomach and on March 2, 2023, she went to be with Jesus.

Viv's family donated her Bibles, books and notebooks to FLC. What a treasure to read how Viv grew in her relationship to Jesus from the day she accepted Jesus, June 4, 1991, until the day she went to meet Jesus. Here's one journal entry, a prayer:

*"You are my refuge, my strength,
my rock . . . Thank You Lord!!*

For all You do for me . . .

*Your tender mercies, Your love,
never ending no matter what.*

I have given up, time and time again.

But You have never given up on me.

Thank You Lord!!

Just waiting patiently for me

to come to you, in prayer.

I Love You Lord!!"

We miss Viv dearly, but celebrate that she is with Jesus, her Lord.



"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

ADULT EDUCATION

Faith Learning Centre

BY GERALD DAHL, PRINCIPAL

Routine can be an integral part of faith. Some of the weekly/monthly/ad hoc routines for Faith Adult Learning Centre, along with prayer prompts, can be listed as follows:

8:30 am daily - Staff meets for prayer - thank God that we can do this!

- Thank you for your prayers also! Ahmed, from the last newsletter, had winter housing that was warm/secure and other concerns benefited from your prayers and His grace!

BREAKING NEWS - Just as I was writing this, an unscheduled visitor requested entry. I met with this needy soul but was unable to help her due to the powerful degree of imbalance that was debilitating her. She asked me to speak with her caseworker

on the phone and throughout, I simply trusted that God would use all contacts from this unplanned interaction for His glory. As our guest left, with a cup of tea and an application form, I asked if I could pray and she said I was making her cry. She then thanked me for trying to help her.

- **Please pray for this young lady, "S"**, and for the other visitors who I screen and at times admit in hopes of offering a kind word and more for the Lord.

9:00 am - Coffee's ready for students as they arrive. I am thankful for **volunteer, Wayne**, who refreshes others with set-up/clean-up of this service.

- Please pray for more volunteers of all sorts.
- Please call 204-586-1416 ext. 402, if you like filing or tutoring, or if you want to pop in weekly with a snack and do some light surface cleaning. Volunteers spread the love of God!

10:15 am - Godly and gifted teachers lead students in daily devotions. Chapel occurs every Tuesday and Thursday at this time. **Please pray for Gerald, Leah and Lisa**, that we obediently and lovingly share gospel truth in appealing and convincing ways.

Please pray for commitments and lasting re-commitments such that a holy awe of God would cover this place and move beyond, into the homes and futures for all students.

11:30 am - Time for a thirty-minute staff meeting once a month. (5 admin and 5 in-service days also allow for planning).

- **Please pray that all of our deliberations would focus on 'Nobody but Jesus'.**
- **Please pray for new efficiencies and energy** to develop a program that will uniquely build up students gripped by a new identity in Christ and for them to explore all the treasures, which are in Christ! (Confidence and opportunity as a reward for disciplined study, not to mention the desire to work, serve, and worship well with others.)

3:15 pm - Some students need to leave early to catch a bus. Others walk home. **Please pray for safety.**

- Other students have large families or too little bus money to attend regularly. **Please pray for childcare and family support as well as daily provision for all.**
- Many are well into adulthood and ever more isolated in terms of family, abode and employability. **Please pray for mental health, friends, goals, achievements and blessing over despair.**
- **Please pray that students would determine to attend regularly and work diligently as unto the Lord.**
- Whenever class is in session, **please pray that students would worship God by acknowledging His goodness to them.**

It is my privilege to serve students and remind them of God's faithfulness one day at a time, one conversation at a time, one prayer at a time. **Please pray for wisdom and joy as we keep on keepin' on. Above all, please pray that we will seek first His Kingdom.**



CHARIS CENTRE

A Typical Day at Charis Centre

BY LORIANN TULK
CHARIS CENTRE MANAGER

At Charis Centre, 7 am is the time for the ladies to get up and start their day. Tina (Residential Support Worker), cooks and serves breakfast every weekday morning where the ladies get breakfast on request. This is a special and loved time of fellowship between residents and Tina over food.

After breakfast is devotions at 9 am. Mondays & Tuesdays Marilyn (volunteer) leads devotions with the ladies. Marilyn always takes the time to make the devotional special in some way. On Wednesdays and Thursdays Tina does devotions, or one of our residents will lead. On Friday, our Chaplain, Freda, leads chapel. This is a special time of praise and worship and a message from the Bible.

Each day after devotions varies with classes scheduled at different times, or appointments with counsellors; the ladies’ chaplain or case manager will keep track of their time and commitments. In addition to this, there are outside appointments with other agencies, such as CFS, EIA, Probation, etc. Amongst all of the seriousness and heavy classes we require, we like to allow the ladies to enjoy some creative time. Every Wednesday, Young Ran (volunteer) comes in and does crafts with the ladies. Again there is much thought, planning and effort put into each week. The residents’ creative talents are highlighted and they get to keep their beautiful creations. Once a month, a group from Charleswood Community Church comes in to do a craft with the women and spend time with them, but they do not leave before cooking a delicious dinner!

The weekends are more relaxed; the ladies receive passes to go visit family and friends. They get some downtime. On Sunday morning, they are picked

up for church by Ken (volunteer). On Monday we start all over again...

While the residents are busy attending to their schedules, our staff are busy meeting with the ladies, preparing for and teaching classes, facilitating groups, attending meetings and other tasks that are required. As much as every day may look similar, every day is very different.

We are currently in great need of a part-time/weekend cook. On the weekends our staff are pulling double duty, filling the role of Residential Support worker and cook. Please pray that God leads the right person to Charis to fill this need.

As you can see, this ministry is not a ‘one man show’. We rely so much on volunteers and value the effort that they put into their role. There are many volunteers that are not mentioned in this article who play a vital role at the Charis Centre. Please keep all staff and volunteers in prayer, as well as the residents as they fight to overcome their addictions.

Testimony

One of our recovering addicts recently gave his this testimony as he graduated from Phase 1 to Phase 2 in our men’s program. (This man is a great brother in the Lord and at over 6 feet 3 inches, and 250 lbs of muscle, we would not dare say otherwise! Joking aside, a gentle brother of a strong tender heart.)

“My name is Jimmy Sugar Ray Constantineau, born in Winnipeg, MB, June 11, 1979.

Today March 6th 2023, I am united with the Lord, and I am one spirit with Him! I am assured that all things work together for good to those who love God! God steadies me as I walk today. I have become steady – firmly fixed in position.

God has set my feet on solid ground out of the despair. I had lost all hope, confidence and feeling completely hopeless. Being back at UGM and reunited with the Lord has been one of the biggest and best choices I have made in life. At last, I could be my own self with a desire and good expectations of what is wanted. That is, to recover all the stuff that the devil stole and destroyed from me. I feel most of his strategies against me come to me through my mind, so that is where my struggles occur.

My thoughts determine my behaviour and my feelings. When I capture every thought and bring them into obedience of Christ, it becomes better. Less stress and more insight.”

Footnote: Sadly, Ray has left us again. He is a young man who has been shabbily dealt with by the system. He is also a man who started life with some physical challenges. To look at him, you would see a tall, strong, good looking guy, but beneath the exterior are the struggles he referred to in his testimony above.

The work of prayer, of loving those we serve, is never over! Please pray that Ray turns his back on the world and returns to his family here at UGM, (and we are family!) More importantly, please pray that Ray once again prioritizes Jesus as number one in his life!

Men's Resident Program

We currently have 17 men in our addictions recovery program and three interns. We continue to see the Lord Jesus Christ working in men's lives to set them free from their addictions and show them the joy of salvation in Christ.

Pray for Men in Recovery Program:

- Kelly, Axel, Steven, Mark, Joshua, Dale, Ken, Marc, Clark, Daniel B., Kirby, Rob, Daniel V., and Joe.

Specific Prayer Requests for Men's Recovery:

- Pray for Steven, he still struggles with PTSD from traumatic experiences from years ago. May the Lord bring peace and healing to him so that he does not suffer so much from his panic attacks.
- Pray for Kirby, he has had a number of family members die recently and the grief can be heavy for him sometimes.

Street Ministry

In our street ministry, we recently held our special Easter chapel services and meals. We served 253 people. Seven people accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior! The presence of the Lord could be felt as everyone heard the gospel message and the hope of the risen Christ that comes with that message.

Prayer Requests for Street Guests:

- Please pray for Melissa who struggles with a crystal meth addiction and is tormented by hallucinations. May the Lord deliver her from her addiction and give her peace.
- Please pray for the increasing violence in the inner-city due to the crystal meth crisis. May the Lord keep our street guests safe in the midst of all the dangers that come with living on the streets these days.
- Please pray for John. He is a young man who came to the Mission recently after being bear sprayed. He said that he is tired of living on the street with all the violence and danger that comes with it. He likes coming to the Mission, as he is able to get a break from the struggles of the street when he is at UGM.

Bill & Marilyn Lennox Serving together at Union Gospel Mission



After working and living in northern Manitoba for over 30 years, we retired and moved to Winnipeg. Freshly retired we were looking for ways to continue serving the Lord. Both of us were drawn to UGM. Our last few years in Thompson were busy with a street ministry for the homeless, so serving at UGM seemed like the perfect fit for our new southern home.

Marilyn volunteers at the Charis Center, helping in the office as needed and also leads morning devotions and a recovery class with the women. She

enjoys interacting with the women, praying for them and encouraging them in their Christian walk.

Since 2018, Bill has volunteered at the Mission by contacting Mission donors, thanking them for their support and asking "How can we pray for you?" The UGM family gets together daily to bring all these requests to the throne of grace. Many of UGM's donors are also our prayer warriors, so interacting with so many faithful supporters is a real blessing!

Walk of Light, Letter from a Participant

I was happy to be invited to the Walk of Light on Monday, February 20. Some members of the group picked me up from my place. One volunteer welcomed us at the parking lot. We prayed and gave intros in the chapel.

While we walked in -24 Celsius with chilly wind and light snow, I learned a lot about all the missions in the neighborhood making it a better place.

I live with physical and mental disabilities, and appreciated the group members who walked with me for safety and encouragement. I really enjoyed the one member guiding me while describing the murals on the buildings. In spite of my vision impairment, I have always been inspired by art.

After walking 2.6 miles, it was nice to sit down and have lunch! I was tired

and complained about hardships I faced as a person with many disability issues and low income. I've lived in the hood most of my life, as it's close to buses and services downtown.

To my surprise, they turned my pity party into praise! They not only took the time to listen to me, but showed compassion and empathy, sharing their own stories and even prayed for me! After that, one of the volunteers gave me a generous lunch bag to take home, which I very much enjoyed! Thank you UGM for making me feel welcome, valued and appreciated. God bless you!
Deanna

N.B. The dozen or so walkers with Deanna stopped and prayed over the following sites: Siloam Mission, Main Street Project, Love Lives Here, Neechi Commons (now empty), UGM Family Life Centre, UGM Adult Learning Centre, Millar College of the Bible and Youth for Christ. Our overwhelming desire is to have the gospel shared and Jesus Christ lifted up. To God be the glory!

UGM's Youngest Volunteer

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Adorable Lehava makes for a wonderful Personal Potato Picker (PPP). At 12 months old, Lehava has become a much loved and appreciated volunteer. Grandmother Eleanor is her coach!



UGM “NOBODY BUT JESUS” RADIOTHON

With **CHVN 95.1 FM**
June 14 & 15
6:00 am - 6:00 pm each day

Please tune in! We primarily desire to honour the Lord with “Nobody but Jesus” real life stories of transformation and redemption, of healing and deliverance. We would also like to encourage our Radio Hosts by a record number of listeners tuning in! “Nobody but Jesus”!



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